

LONDON'S BIG FIRE

Was one of the Most Disastrous Since that of 1666.

ONE HUNDRED WAREHOUSES

Filled With Inflammable Stocks of Christmas Goods

ARE LITERALLY BLOTTED OUT

One Hundred Fire Engines Were Playing Upon the Flames at One Time—The Historic Church of St. Giles Badly Damaged—The Loss Will Amount to \$25,000,000—The Conflagration Made a Brilliant Spectacle as Night Closed in on the Scene of Destruction—Many Narrow Escapes Were Made.

LONDON, Nov. 19.—One of the most disastrous fires in London's history since the great fire of 1666, broke out in a large block of buildings lying eastward of Aldersgate, south and between that thoroughfare and Red Cross street, just after 1 o'clock this afternoon. The flames were fanned by a strong wind and were fed by highly inflammable stocks of Christmas fancy goods and flimsy dress materials of all descriptions that filled every floor of the six-story buildings in the old street. Consequently the conflagration gained headway with surprising rapidity, and was soon far beyond the possibility of being checked by the few engines which were early on the spot. For four hours and a half the flames had their own way and it was only after more than a hundred engines had worked an hour that the chief of the fire brigade sent out the signal that fire was under control.

At 11 o'clock to-night the fire is still the scene of great excitement. Fifty engines are playing upon the ruins, wagons are hurrying on coal, and tons of water are pouring into the fiery chasm.

Thousands of people are trying to penetrate the cordon maintained by a thousand policemen reinforcements for whom were hurried up when soon after the outbreak an increase in the outbreak led Commander Wells to make a requisition for more engines upon the outlying stations.

The scene must occupy the fire brigade for several days, especially in view of the grave danger of the collapse of shells of buildings which fall now and again with a loud report. The latest accounts indicate that nearly a hundred warehouses have been destroyed, while the loss will probably exceed \$25,000,000. The historic church of Saint Giles has been much damaged, the principal damages being to the roof, the old window, the baptismal font and Milton's statue.

Hansell street was the scene of the outbreak of the fire which was due to an explosion in connection with a gas on the premises of Walter Brown & Co., mantle manufacturers at No. 30 on that thoroughfare. Their factory was crowded with girls when the fire broke out and it was instantly the scene of a panic. A quarter of an hour the flames had enveloped the adjoining warehouse, and thence they leaped across the street to an enormous paper warehouse, which was fully alight in less than ten minutes.

By this time it was evident to the firemen that they were face to face with a great disaster, and a general panic was seen on the faces of the fire stations, even those quite five miles from the scene of the disaster, were hurried to the spot and the police gathered about the neighborhood in great force.

This display of strength on the part of the police was required as the crowd, swelling in size every moment, soon amounted to tens of thousands of people and the firemen required every possible freedom of action as their fight was one of the greatest difficulty, owing to the narrowness of the old, crooked streets which are the features of that part of London, combined with the fact that the warehouses which cut off the firemen from all fair chance of confining the outbreak. The excitement among the onlookers who crowded every possible point of view, was very great. The fact that firemen had to be repeatedly rescued by their comrades by the aid of the fire escapes from buildings which had caught fire after the firemen had thrust their heads into the flames in adjoining structures.

The rescue of operatives by the firemen; the hurrying of hosts of clerks, who were trying to save books and valuable papers from the fire, and the rushing of the firemen to the rescue of the operatives, who were attempting to carry to places of safety costly merchandise of other values, added to the confusion. The heat was so intense that the firemen were obliged to direct their operations under showers of water which were poured upon them.

At 11 o'clock the firemen were steadily pushing the fire back, and it was situated at the far end of Hansell street, was reached.

At a little after 2 o'clock a dozen horse fires, each with a twelve-horse engine, rushed into the place from an opposite road from the street below and from the burning premises themselves, but it did not seem to have any effect. The flames rushed out of the windows and from the ground like a wall of fire, while the flames leaped higher and higher and as the flames fell in the place still blazed, a gigantic display of fire and smoke until the building was completely gutted and the walls keeled over.

The confusion in the streets increased as the fire spread. Suddenly there was an explosion of gas meters, sounding the alarm of fire, followed by a second explosion, a momentary burst. After that the wild rushing here and there was replaced with increased energy. Men risked their lives in desperate efforts to save books, jewelry, feathers, etc. One man actually hazarded his life to fetch his hat and cane, two hundred feet of stone and glass falling at his heels as he rushed from the building.

Several firemen were almost buried in burning ruins as they ran from front of the burning warehouses fell in, hurling tons of bricks and masonry into the streets, bursting and cutting the fire.

VERY QUICK WORK.

The Canadian Premier Convenes Cabinet on His Return.

A COMMISSION DECIDED ON

To Meet a Similar Commission Appointed on Behalf of This Country to Endeavor to Reach a Settlement on All Boundary and Other Questions at Present at Issue—Laurier Says the Sealing Question Cannot be Settled by Itself, But Must be Considered with Other Matters. The Exact Proposition that was Laid Before the Recent Conference by the United States.

OTTAWA, Ont., Nov. 19.—Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Sir Louis Davies have returned from Washington. Within a couple of hours after their arrival a meeting of the cabinet was held, at which the premier explained the recent negotiations with President McKinley and his ministers. As a result of this meeting it is stated that the cabinet has decided to send a commission to Washington, composed of men familiar with the various questions involved, to meet with a similar body of men appointed on behalf of the United States, with ex-Secretary Foster at its head, and endeavor to reach a settlement on all boundary and other questions at present at issue between the two countries.

At the conclusion of the cabinet meeting Premier Laurier in an interview said: "It is plain to see that the sealing question cannot be settled by itself. It can only be considered in connection with irritating and important questions. There is no intention whatever of negotiating any reciprocity treaty which would interfere with Canada's existing British preferential tariff."

When asked as to the result of their visit to the United States, Sir Louis Davies said: "After both representative parties confer with their colleagues in their respective administrations, statements of the demands regarding the proposed reciprocal trade relations will be exchanged and replies submitted by each."

"I can add nothing new to what I said as to the American tariff pressing too heavily upon us in respect to their duties on our lumber, coal and fish exports. I think the United States authorities after they have maturely considered the whole situation in regard to Canada will agree as to the correctness of our position. This may carry sufficient weight with the joint commission, should one be agreed to, to make such reciprocal arrangements as are most desirable to both countries."

When asked as to the result of the final appointment of a joint commission, he said: "The prospects of a joint commission are good."

WASHINGTON, D. C., Nov. 19.—The dispatches from Ottawa announcing that the Canadian cabinet has decided to send a commission to Washington to negotiate with a similar commission appointed by the United States, touching all the questions at issue between the United States and Canada has had the important effect of drawing forth here, for the first time, a statement of the exact proposition which was laid before the Canadian contingent when they were in Washington a few days ago. It can now be stated that the proposal of Mr. Foster, representing the United States, was that the Canadian delegates should take home with them to submit to their cabinet was:

First.—That both nations agree to a suspension of all killing of seals in the next season in the Pacific ocean and Bering sea, the modus to go into operation on the first of next month.

Second.—That representatives of the United States and Great Britain, including Canada, be designated to enter with as little delay as possible upon the consideration of all unsettled questions between the United States and Great Britain, to include the sealing questions and any other matters which the governments may choose to bring forward. This may be some delay, however, in awaiting the arrival of the papers in the case. These were not taken by Archbishop Keane, but were forwarded to Rome a few days ago.

Third.—That the Canadian cabinet should be authorized to accept the proposition of the United States, to include the sealing questions and any other matters which the governments may choose to bring forward. This may be some delay, however, in awaiting the arrival of the papers in the case. These were not taken by Archbishop Keane, but were forwarded to Rome a few days ago.

One important fact that is not clearly disclosed in the Canadian dispatches is that the modus must be agreed upon positively before our government consents to the commission. In other words, there must be a definite agreement that the commission is at work. The commission might occupy a long time in its deliberations, and if a pelagic sealing is to go on meanwhile, it is better to have the agreement made by our experts that there will be no seals left to serve as a basis for negotiations. The proposition of our government having been so explicitly stated, it may be understood that the announcement of the British cabinet to appoint a commission implies that they have decided to accept the proposition, namely the agreement upon a modus vivendi. Nothing has yet been done in the matter of the seal, but the Canadian commission has been agreed upon. Probably Messrs. Foster and Kason and possibly Mr. Hamilton will be of our side, and owing to the nature and complexity of the question that would come before the commission under the liberal permissive clause, other members might be required. In the nature of experts in particular lines, such as the fisheries, mining and timber and such matters.

A definite feature of the proposed commission is that Sir Julian Pauncefote, the British ambassador, shall be the head of the British-Canadian commission, and in all probability that Sir Wilfrid Laurier shall be associated with the ambassador on the commission. This choice of the British ambassador is significant as showing the purpose of this government to fully recognize the imperial character of the negotiations, and to conduct them only through the authorized representatives of the British government.

The Central Pacific Default. WASHINGTON, Nov. 19.—The government is actively engaged in the preparation of its case against the Central Pacific Company, in anticipation of the company's default in its payments due on January 1, 1898. What action, in case of default, has not yet been decided upon, and the only purpose of the government is in looking up the law in the case and preparing a statement of its financial condition, should such a course be decided upon.

St. Louis Postmaster's Special Dispatch to the Intelligence. WASHINGTON, Nov. 19.—The President has appointed Mr. George B. Work, to postmaster at St. Louis, Mo., Va.

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TREND OF TRADE.

All Markets and Industries are Working Toward the

PERIOD OF THANKSGIVING.

Of Stock-Taking and the Holidays—Colder Weather has Done Much to Accelerate Retail Trade—The Producing Forces are Unable to Take all the Orders Offered.

NEW YORK, Nov. 19.—R. G. Dun & Co.'s weekly review of trade will say in its issue of to-morrow: All markets and all industries are working toward the period of Thanksgiving, of stock taking and of holidays. Colder weather has done much to accelerate retail trade, so greatly delayed in many lines by unusually mild and open weather. The producing forces are unable to take all the orders offered, while others are committed as far ahead as they are willing to be. The output in several great industries is considerably the largest known and the confidence of great business next year is unabated. Hesitation in speculative markets is in part because an immense capital has been turned from them to investment in productive enterprises.

Wheat has advanced a cent during the week, and small fluctuations have been due to reports about Argentina rather than to the heaviest exports ever known. Atlantic exports, flour included, have been in three weeks of November 8,799,469 bushels, against 6,002,000 last year, and in the crop year thus far over 36,000,000 bushels, while the western receipts have been in three weeks 21,203,660 bushels, against 14,796,888 last year. Corn exports have been 2,018,000 bushels, against 1,616,688 last year. Cotton declined to 5.81 cents, with heavy receipts, but closed at 5.87, with better foreign demand and with frosts, which have lessened the prospect of a heavy movement later.

Iron products have changed but slightly in price, with wire nails and rods a shade lower, and while the consumption of pig iron is increasing, rather than to the heaviest exports ever known. Atlantic exports, flour included, have been in three weeks of November 8,799,469 bushels, against 6,002,000 last year, and in the crop year thus far over 36,000,000 bushels, while the western receipts have been in three weeks 21,203,660 bushels, against 14,796,888 last year. Corn exports have been 2,018,000 bushels, against 1,616,688 last year. Cotton declined to 5.81 cents, with heavy receipts, but closed at 5.87, with better foreign demand and with frosts, which have lessened the prospect of a heavy movement later.

Some interesting features were brought out at the meeting. There have been nine local meetings in the past during the year, and at present the order numbers 13,288 members in West Virginia. The growth of the Daughters of Rebekah in this state during the past year has been 40 per cent. A report conveyed the information that the receipts of the supreme lodge for the year were \$9,763,000, and there was paid out in sick and funeral benefits \$2,233,000.

At the meeting 178 lodges were represented, and there were seventy-five visiting representatives. Among those present were: Wheeling—Excelsior, No. 14, R. W. Martin; Franklin, No. 4, Ella D. Williams; Tell, No. 6, Philip Winters; Virginia, No. 2, T. H. Higgins; Wheeling, No. 12, J. D. Williams; West Virginia, No. 1, Hoffman; Abraham, No. 1, Hoffman; Eureka, No. 4, Hoffman; Concord, No. 4, Charles Hahn.

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